

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Other previously recorded historic sites located in the vicinity of the current project are north of Clear Run. There are five sites within eight miles of site 31SP300 that all date to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These are sites 31SP30, 31SP92, 31SP138, 31SP142, and 31SP144. Each of them was recorded during the Sampson County survey conducted by Hackbarth and Fournier-Hackbarth in 1980 (Hackbarth and Fournier-Hackbarth 1981). These sites were all either houses or farmhouses. Sites 31SP92 and 31SP142 had cemeteries associated with them that dated to the 1870s and 1865-1912, respectively. No artifacts were collected from 31SP92, but the house has Greek Revival details. There are also two tobacco barns present. Site 31SP142 had two barns with no remaining house. Historic artifacts included a blue transfer rimsherd, a purple transfer body sherd, a rimsherd with molded decoration, five whiteware sherds, window glass, metal, and brick.

Although no house is standing at site 31SP30, an informant indicated its former location. A brown and tan annular ware sherd, an interior whiteware sherd, and a whiteware blue shell-edged sherd were collected.

Site 31SP138 included a house, tobacco barn, machinery, and a dam. Artifacts included a molded edge decorated sherd, a green molded edge rimsherd, an overglaze flower decal sherd, a handpainted underglaze sherd, and several whiteware sherds. No stoneware was present. Logs are still in place underneath the clapboard siding on the 20-x-25-foot house.

Site 31SP144 had no standing house, only a 2.5-foot-high mound of brick and stone near a large oak. Shovel testing recovered unglazed ceramics, crockery sherds, glass, brick, and buttons.

Prior to the data recovery conducted at site 31SP300*1* there were several exploratory steps. The first archaeological survey of the 1.5-acre (3.7 ha) project area that could be impacted by the NC 411 bridge replacement was conducted on December 8, 1993, by Anna Gray and Deborah Joy of the NCDOT. The survey included visual inspection and pedestrian survey on both sides of NC 411. The blacksmith-cooper shop listed as a component of the Clear Run Plantation National Register site was not located during this survey. However, the remains of a house and a barn were located on the north side of NC 411. Portions of a metal stove pipe and possibly the stove itself were discovered nearby, as well as unidentified metal pieces. These structures would have been impacted had one of the other bridge replacement alternatives been pursued. The property owner noted that this had probably been one of the worker's houses. On the south side of NC 411, the remains of a turpentine still, a warehouse, and tar/pitch beds were documented (Gray 1994a).

Further assessment and testing of the site was conducted August 23-25, 1994, by Anna Gray, Deborah Joy, and Megan O'Connell of the NCDOT. The survey consisted of pedestrian survey including the use of a metal detector as well as selective and systematic shovel testing placed at approximately 5 m intervals. Both sides of the road were visually inspected and surveyed, but subsurface testing was done only on the north side of NC 411 in the reported site area. The area tested was approximately 15 x 80 meters. Ten shovel tests (50 x 50 centimeter) were excavated and the fill was screened through 0.25-inch mesh. A 5-inch bucket auger was employed to determine stratigraphy beyond the reach of a shovel. Two timber piles were visible on the surface. They appeared hand-hewn and contained cut nails. A smaller pile existed approximately 7 m west of a larger pile. Avoidance of the site was recommended (Gray 1994b). If this were not possible, data recovery efforts would be needed to mitigate the adverse impacts to the site.